**Schema Theory ERQ Analysis**

**Schema theory’s strengths and limitations can be seen in Brewer and Treyens’ (1981) study. Their aim was to investigate whether people’s memory are influenced by schemas. To research this they had 30 university students arrive individually to the lab and they were asked to wait in an office containing objects (eg. Desk, typewriter, coffee-pot, calendar). There were also other objects that did not conform to the office schema (eg. a skull, piece of bark, a pair of pliers). After waiting for some time, participants were taken out of the office and asked to write down everything they could remember from the room. The findings were that most participants recalled the objects that fit with an office schema (eg. Desk, typewriter) and also some participants reported things that would be expected in an office but not present in this one (e.g. telephone, books).**

Analysis 1

This supports the schema theory because it shows that memory is influenced by schemas as some participants filled in gaps of their memory by activating an office schema to list items that weren’t even there. However this study highlights a limitation of the schema theory in that it doesn’t explain how people acquire schemas in the first place. The study merely shows for some an office schema is activated and influences their memory but this may be because the sample group were all University students who may have spent more time in an office setting than others. Therefore their schemas of what’s expected in an office may be stronger and thus easily activated. For those who haven’t spent a lot of time in an office however, their memory may not have been influenced by schemas and have led to a more accurate portrayal of the office. Due to the limited sample, the generalizability of schemas’ influence on memory is low.

Analysis 2

This supports the schema theory because it is easily replicable. This study can be easily repeated and if the same findings occur then it increases the study’s face validity. However, the weaknesses of this study is the limited sample. The study only consisted of University students so it is not very generalizable. Another weakness is the low ecological validity. This was done in a lab setting and the participants were asked to write down everything they remember about an office which isn’t something they’d have to do in everyday life. Also demand characteristics could’ve played a part here because participants might’ve guessed that they’d be asked to recall details about the office they were waiting in. This would’ve affected the findings because participants might have recalled a higher number of details than usual.

**Which analysis is better and why?**